

NURHAN ARMAN, Conductor
STÉPHANE TÉTREAU, Cellist

Nostalgia

Jocelyn Morlock
(1969 -2023)

Cello Concerto in A Minor, Op. 129

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

Nicht zu schnell - Langsam - Sehr lebhaft

Stéphane Tétreault, Cellist

- intermission -

Concerto grosso in G minor, Op. 6, no. 8, "Christmas" Arcangelo Corelli
(1653- 1713)

- I. Vivace
- II. Allegro
- III. Adagio - Allegro - Adagio
- IV. Vivace
- V. Allegro
- VI. Largo - Pastorale ad libitum

Slavonic Dance Op. 46, no. 3
String orchestration by Tony Kime

Antonín Dvořák
(1840-1914)

Two Waltzes, Op. 54
Dvořák's original orchestration

Slavonic Dances Op. 72, nos. 2 and 7
String orchestration by Nurhan Arman

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Sinfonia Toronto

Now in its 25th season, Sinfonia Toronto has toured in Europe, the US, South America and China, and performs in cities across Ontario. It has released six cd's, including the JUNO winner *Flanders Fields Reflections* and *Shadow & Light* in May 2023 featuring three Canadian double concertos.

Sinfonia Toronto's Digital Inclusion Project has shared concert livestreams and videos free for residents in 43 long-term care homes in Ontario and students attending non-profit community music schools. Their interactive 'Concerts under Construction' programs introduce students in high-needs schools to varied musical styles and model the positive effects of cooperation.

The orchestra's repertoire includes all the major string orchestra works of the 18th through 21st centuries, and it has premiered many new works, especially music by Canadian composers. Under the baton of Music Director Nurhan Arman, the orchestra's performances present outstanding international guest artists and prominent Canadian musicians.



Nurhan Arman, Music Director

During the 2022-23 season in addition to his leadership of Sinfonia Toronto Nurhan Arman guest-conducted the Orchestre Classique de Montréal and orchestras in Germany, Georgia, Greece and Italy. Other recent engagements have included a four-concert tour in Italy with Orchestra I Pomeriggi Musicali, the Festival Udine Castello, National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia and return engagements with the Kammerorchester Arpeggione in Austria and San Remo Philharmonic in Italy. His 2023-2024 season has taken off with the opening concert of Sinfonia Toronto's 25th Anniversary season and guest engagements in Austria and Italy.

Maestro Arman has conducted throughout Canada, Europe, Asia, South America and the United States, returning regularly to many orchestras in Europe. Among the orchestras he has conducted are the Moscow Philharmonic, the Deutsches Kammerorchester, l'Orchestre Regional d'Ile de France, Hermitage Orchestra St. Petersburg, the Hungarian Symphony, Orchestra Milano Classica and Belgrade Philharmonic.

Born to Armenian parents in Istanbul, he played his first violin recital at the age of 13. After arriving in the United States on a Disney Foundation scholarship, he concertized from coast to coast, performing across the United States and at the Tanglewood, Spoleto, New York and Florida music festivals. After several seasons of leading US orchestras as concertmaster, he began a conducting career that has taken him all over the world.

Maestro Arman has served as an adjudicator for international conducting competitions in Poland and Canada and has taught conducting to several generations of students at the Brockport Festival and the Florida Festival in the United States, the Northern Music Festival in Canada and the Royal Conservatory of Music.



Happy 25th Silver Anniversary season!

Our musicians and I send out warmest greetings and gratitude to our audiences, donors, granting agencies and business partners for their support!

It has been a great privilege to make music together, exploring magical creations of the past and present, and introducing terrific young performers in Toronto.

During international tours on four continents we have experienced the power of music to connect cultures. Our inspirations and dreams for a better world are endless. We are delighted to have you with us for this season of celebration, passion and wonderful music.

Nurhan Arman
Music Director

Program Notes

By Dr. Lorne Tepperman

Nostalgia

Jocelyn Morlock (1969 -2023)

Jocelyn Morlock worked with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra as their first female Composer-in-Residence from 2014 to 2019. In 2018 she won a JUNO for *My Name Is Amanda Todd*. Her music is inspired by birds, insomnia, nature, fear, other people's music and art, nocturnal thoughts, lucid dreaming, death, and the liminal times and experiences before and after death. Her compositions include film scores, choral pieces and solo, ensemble and orchestral scores.

Nostalgia is inspired by a Bach sonata and two passages by Milan Kundera: "In the sunset of dissolution, everything is illuminated by the aura of nostalgia." (The Unbearable Lightness of Being), and "You can suffer nostalgia in the presence of the beloved if you glimpse a future where the beloved is no more." (Ignorance)

Ms. Morlock explained, "My starting point for this piece was the Adagio of Bach's *Sonata for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord*, BWV 1027, a piece which for me is replete with nostalgia. The opening melody has a sweet sadness that I find irresistible. While I used some fragments of the Bach for my own musical purposes throughout *Nostalgia*, the referencing is only audible in the coda. Rather than building a piece on Bach's music, my intent

was to refer to the many emotions I feel when listening to the Adagio, to create a rumination upon this seductive but surreal world of memory. Aside from the undoubted delights of glimpsing the past through a sentimental haze, nostalgia also has some darker facets; engaging in an obsessive love for the past makes it easy to lose sight of the present, and nothing appears quite as wonderful as that which is forever lost.”

Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129 Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Schumann only composed for the piano until 1840, then began to write for voice and for orchestra. The music of his contemporaries - Mendelssohn, Chopin, and Liszt - as well as German literature all influenced his music.

Mirroring the ups and downs of his mental state ever after a period of severe melancholy in 1833, Schumann's compositional output also went through active and depressive phases. His mood swings are today thought to have been due to a bipolar condition or perhaps by mercury poisoning. Schumann confined himself to a mental institution after an unsuccessful suicide attempt in 1854, where he passed away from pneumonia two years later.

Schumann composed his Cello Concerto in Düsseldorf in 1850 during one of his happier and more productive periods. He belonged to the Romantic era; his Cello Concerto is lyrical, inward, and passionate. The solo part is written almost entirely in the instrument's middle and upper range, to project through the orchestra and sing with an eloquent, voice-like tone.

The concerto consists of three movements which flow together without breaks. Thematic material introduced in the first movement recurs in later movements. These features create a work which is extremely unified but not repetitious: the themes are used in different contexts and evoke different moods, ranging from deeply meditative to agitated and brilliant.

A romantic cello melody opens the first movement, arousing feelings of nostalgia and desire. In the slow second movement, the cello plays another beautiful, pensive melody complemented by a lavish orchestral background. This movement consists of a theme and variations, with each next variation focusing on a distinctive melodic element. In the third movement, a vibrant cello motif is picked up by the orchestra. The movement is built in rondo form, short sections of contrasted moods and feelings.



Schumann once famously declared "I cannot write a concerto for the virtuosos. I must try for something else." His writing here is personal and lyrical rather than full of étude-like passages meant to display the soloist's technical skill. Perhaps for this reason, this concerto was not received warmly in Schumann's time, but now it is beloved for its great melodic beauty. This evening's performance is the premiere of a string quartet version created by Markus Höring and Andreas Heinig adapted for string orchestra by Nurhan Arman.

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Christmas Concerto

Arcangelo Corelli (1653- 1713)

Corelli became one of the most influential and celebrated composers of the Baroque era, known as the “father of the *concerto grosso*” and in his own time as “the prince of musicians.” He showed remarkable talent from an early age, and by the age of 20 had proved himself as a virtuoso violinist, soon becoming a sought-after teacher.

His first major compositions, 12 sonatas for violin and basso continuo, were published in 1681 and quickly marked him as a leading composer of the day. In 1687 Corelli moved to Rome and rapidly made a name for himself there playing in ensembles sponsored by wealthy patrons.

In Rome Corelli began to experiment with the *concerto grosso*, a form of music in which a small group of soloists are accompanied by a larger ensemble. Corelli's *concerti grossi* feature intricate interplay between the soloists and the orchestra and showcase his skill at crafting complex polyphonic textures. Though his entire production is limited to just six published collections, they propelled him to great fame and success throughout Europe.

Through his development of modern playing techniques and his many disciples, Corelli established the violin as a prestigious solo instrument. His pupils included Francesco Geminiani, Pietro Locatelli and Antonio Vivaldi,

who all went on to become important figures in their own right. And his compositions influenced Vivaldi, Handel, Bach and Couperin.

First performed in 1690 for a new patron, the Concerto Grosso Op. 6, No. 8 bears the inscription “Made for the night of Christmas.” Since its publication in 1714 it has remained one of Corelli's most famous works. The concerto's six short movements alternate between fast and slow. At many points during the faster movements of this piece listeners may feel certain they are listening to Vivaldi, and in the slower movements Handel – but of course the influence actually went the other direction, and shows Corelli's importance in developing Baroque style.

Dances from Op. 46, 54 and 72

Antonín Dvořák (1840-1914)

Dvořák was born in a village near Prague, the eldest of eight children. He showed early signs of musical talent, began learning violin when he was six, and later became skillful in both piano and organ. Despite these early signs, however, he did not begin to study music seriously until his late teens. He studied at the Prague Organ School and became a violist with the orchestra of the Provincial Theatre and then the National Theatre. In the early 1870's he started to gain a reputation as a composer.

Dvořák had a strong interest in the folk music of his homeland. He believed that music should be accessible to everyone and wanted his music to reflect his country's identity. In the 1870's he became director of the Prague Conservatory and insisted that all students study Czech composers' works.

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In 1874 Dvořák submitted music to a competition for the Austrian State Prize for Composition. Johannes Brahms was chair of the jury and was highly impressed. Dvořák won the prize in 1874, 1876 and 1877. Brahms recommended Dvořák to his own publisher, who commissioned the *Slavonic Dances*, Op. 46. Excellent sales of the piano 4-hands version launched Dvořák's international reputation.

As a violist himself, Dvořák had a natural affinity to writing for strings. Over a period of thirty years, he composed over 40 chamber works, including string quartets. Tonight's performance features beloved selections from his *Waltzes* and *Slavonic Dances*. In traditional romantic style, they are full of beautiful melodies, rich harmonies, and expressive counterpoint.



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